

Summary  
NH Ensuring Equitable Access for all Students to Excellent Educators  
June 1, 2015

**Introduction:** The New Hampshire Department of Education (NH-DOE) submitted a plan to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) to address the long-term needs for improving equitable access to effective teachers in New Hampshire. This plan details the approach to achieving the objective of improving access to excellent educators for the state's most disadvantaged youth. The New Hampshire plan is a comprehensive, systemic, and on-going approach to strengthening and maintaining teacher effectiveness across the state, with an emphasis on the schools and classrooms with the greatest need. New Hampshire intends to use a blended dataset which will utilize both quantitative data currently available at the NH DOE and qualitative data that will be drawn from local districts and schools through a combination of focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The intent is to create a complete and robust plan that is focused on providing the necessary supports to teachers and leaders so that we are confident that all students are being served by excellent educators.

**Process:** To create this plan, the following steps took place.

- Engage stakeholders by creating and convening a group of diverse educational professionals, parents and community stakeholders as the "Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Educators Task Force" (henceforth known as the Task Force), based on the task force models set forth by the Commissioner of Education.
- Reviewed data provided by USED and the NH DOE's Educator Information System (EIS) to identify initial equity gaps.
- Conducted root-cause analyses based on currently available data to identify the challenges that underlie equity gaps to identify and target strategies.
- Developed an initial set of appropriate strategies to begin to address root causes.
- The Task Force will continue to move forward in the development of the plan to determine the monitoring and reporting of progress of strategy implementation.

**Stakeholder Engagement:** In October 2014, the Commissioner of Education requested that a Task Force be convened, which actively engaged a broad group of stakeholders in the development of the NH Model Educator Support and Evaluation System. All pertinent stakeholder groups are represented on the Task Force and the NH-DOE endeavored to ensure that all geographic regions of the state were represented. Invitees were asked to actively engage in a review of state data summaries to discuss equity gaps, their root causes and potential ameliorating strategies. Through an ongoing review of pertinent data, the Equity Task Force will draft, refine, and revise the equity plan continuously to ensure that we meet the goal of Equitable Access to Excellent Educators for all children in New Hampshire. Once formed, the Task Force met four times from February, 2015 to May, 2015.

**Equity Gap Exploration and Analysis:** The NH DOE recognizes the challenges to and limitations of the data currently available to identify meaningful equity gaps to determine whether minority students and students in poverty are being disproportionately served by beginning teachers, out-of-field teachers, or, unqualified teachers. The data suggest that the computed equity gaps for student poverty and minority students relative to the categories of out-of-field teachers and unqualified teachers are not particularly meaningful. Thus, these teacher categories will be precluded from further analyses. The findings with respect to the relationship between minority students and beginning teachers suggest that minority students are not currently being disproportionately taught by beginning teachers. In fact, the opposite appears to be true. Thus, for purposes of this report, we will focus the analyses on other equity gaps. The Task Force focused their analysis on equity gaps from comparing highest and lowest quartiles of beginning educators when districts and schools are ranked from highest to lowest based on student poverty for years 2015, 2014, and 2013. It appears that when ranked on poverty, students in the highest quartile of schools and districts over the years in question appear to be served by a larger

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percentage of beginning teachers than do students in the lowest quartile and that these differences are statistically meaningful. In addition to the analyses performed at the state level, the NH DOE determined that it would be extremely worthwhile to explore issues of equity within the Manchester School District. A minority student or a student in poverty attending a Manchester school in the highest quartile of ranking on either of these variables has a better chance of being taught by a beginning teacher than if they were in the lowest quartile of schools.

**Strategies for Eliminating Equity Gaps:** New Hampshire's Theory of Action: If New Hampshire develops a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to talent management that is implemented and monitored over time, then New Hampshire school districts will be better able to recruit, develop and retain effective educators so that all students will have equitable access to excellent teachers and leaders so that student will develop the skills to achieve their highest potential in school and in life.

Equity Gap 1: In the state a statistically significant higher average of beginning teachers is serving students in the highest poverty quartile of districts and schools compared to the average number of beginning teachers serving students in the lowest poverty quartile of districts and schools.

Equity Gap 2: In the Manchester School District, a statistically significant higher average of beginning teachers is serving students in the highest poverty quartile of districts and schools compared to the average number of beginning teachers serving students in the lowest poverty quartile of districts and schools.

Equity Gap 3: In the Manchester School District, a statistically significant higher average of beginning teachers is serving the highest quartile of minority students in districts and schools compared to the average number of beginning teachers serving the lowest quartile of minority students in districts and schools.

Based on these equity gaps, the Task Force developed a list of possible root causes for further exploration. Of these root causes, seven emerged as common across the two problems. Possible Root Causes:

- Culture of low expectations (at a community level)
- Inequitable funding (at the local level)
- Drivers (reasons) behind open positions
- Better teacher preparation/better communication with teacher preparation programs
- Greater scrutiny/more prescriptive teaching (potential additional assessments) Location/enrollment/budget
- Culture of respect (with school and within community)

Of these possible root causes, three emerged as the highest priority: culture of respect within school and community, culture of low expectations, better teacher preparation/better communication with teacher preparation.

An action plan was then developed for Equity Gap1, identifying the strategy, rationale for the strategy, expected outcomes, action steps, resources available, a timeline/benchmarks, and evidence/measures of success. Action plans for Equity Gaps 2 and 3 were then developed with the Manchester stakeholder group.

**Public Reporting of Progress:** Based on data collected from biannual site visits to school districts the NH-DOE will annually provide an update of progress on plan implementation efforts and changes in identified gap areas by posting to the New Hampshire Department of Education website.